

Gardner Public Schools

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Grants, Communications & Compliance Update to School Committee – December 12, 2022

Grants Awaiting Approval from DESE

- School Nutrition Equipment Grant (Fund Code 722)
- Improving Ventilation & Air Quality Grant (Fund Code 209) – Conditionally approved. Awaiting completion of feasibility study to submit forms for final approval.

While most FY22 grants have been closed, all Title grants, ESSER grants, and special education grants have a multi-year feature that allows the district to complete the spending in the following year. At present, FY22 Title I and Title IV have been closed, while Titles II and III are being spent down to close early in the Spring. ESSER II has one item on back order but is prepared to be closed after that item arrives. FY22 240 and 262 are typically closed in the early Spring and are on track for that schedule. Otherwise, FY22 grants have all been closed and accounted for.

The district has been awarded the Innovation Pathways Implementation and Support Grant in the amount of \$50,000. The funding will help provide Certified Nursing Assistant certifications to more than 20 students, a new curriculum in the advanced manufacturing program, and promotion and marketing materials for the Innovation Pathways Program at GHS. The district has also been awarded \$186,000 through the Early College Support Grant to help provide mental health support programming, transportation costs, course seats, curriculum development, and sustaining the College & Career Readiness position. Beyond that, the funding will help to promote the program through professional marketing services in addition to more robust recruitment efforts.

The district is currently in the process of collecting articles and documentation for the Title Grant review due in January. The items are likely to be finalized and submitted to DESE during the month of December.

Communications/Family Engagement

The district-wide Family Engagement Team met on Monday, November 28. The team includes Family Engagement Teacher Leaders, the district-wide Outreach Clinical Social Worker, the ELL Director, the Family Engagement Coordinator, and the Grants, Communications & Compliance Manager. Agenda items included:

- Attendance Letters – how we communicate with the families of students who have missed multiple days of school.
- School Climate Surveys – currently ongoing; Family Engagement Teacher Leaders will assist principals in spreading the word to get as much feedback as possible.
- MTSS Convening – an update about the parent/community engagement event held in early November.
- School Food Pantry Planning – the backpack program is not operational at this point in the year; Family Engagement Teacher Leaders will coordinate with counseling departments to ensure the weekend backpack program is consistently implemented across all schools with the help of the CAC. For reference, this program served roughly 200 families district-wide during the 2021-2022 school year and runs solely on donations and volunteered time.

This group will meet again in December to solidify the team's mission and goals for this school year in addition to creating building-specific action steps to take to improve family engagement.

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